

УДК 373.018.1:316.362

**FAMILY STRUCTURE AS AN IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTAL
FACTOR IN CHILDREN'S PERSONALITY AND COGNITION**

**СТРУКТУРА СЕМЬИ КАК ВАЖНЫЙ ФАКТОР РАЗВИТИЯ
В ДЕТСКОЙ ЛИЧНОСТИ И ПОЗНАНИИ**

Ruth A. Plesanmi

Аннотация

Структура семьи представляет важный аспект развития каждого человека, включая детей. Это происходит потому, что семья-это первый контакт каждого ребенка и это самая маленькая единица общества, где каждый человек выражает себя свободно; это важно, потому что это способствует развитию. в статье делается попытка получить результаты исследования, которые проводились на примере 40 российских детей (7-10 лет) и их родителей, чтобы определить в какой степени структура семьи (семейное положение родителей) влияет детскую личность (чувство личной воли) и познание. Результаты исследования показали, что структура семьи (с точки зрения семейного положения родителей) действительно влияет на детскую личность и его познавательную способность.

Ключевые слова: структура семьи, дети, личность ребенка, познание, познание ребенка, и семейное положение.

Abstract

Family structure represents an important aspect of every person's development, including children. This is because the family is the first contact of every child and it is the smallest unit of the society where every person expresses his/herself freely; this is important because it promotes development. This paper therefore aims at reporting the findings of research carried out on 40 samples of Russian children (7-10 years) and their parents, in order to determine the extent to which family structure (parents' marital status) influence children's personality (sense of personal volition) and cognition. The results obtained at the end of this research showed that family structure (in terms of parents' marital status) indeed influence children's personality and cognition.

Keywords: family structure, children, personality, cognition, development, and marital status.

Introduction

Family structure can be described as the organization and patterning of relationships among individual family members (7). It is

the way in which a family is organized according to roles, rules, power, and hierarchies. Worldwide, the traditional family structure consists of a small unit in the society that includes a father and a mother who provides care for their child/children (11). Family structure can also be referred to as a family support system that includes a father and mother providing care and stability for their biological children (14). But this is very uncommon these days because most families now have either only mother or father living with and caring for children.

According to (1), and (4), children's lives are influenced by the number of parents and siblings that they live with, as well as by whether their parents are married. According to (8), nuclear families (two-parent) constitute a major form of family around the world, despite the increasing rate of other family forms; children under age 18 are more likely to live in two-parent families in Asia and the Middle East when compared with other regions of the world; but children are more likely to live with one or no parent in the America, Europe, Oceania, and Sub-Saharan Africa regions when compared with other regions of the world; extended families (which include parent/parents and other blood relations) also appear to be common in Asia, the Middle East, South America, and Sub-Saharan Africa, but not in other regions of the world; marriage rates are declining in many regions of the world, for example, adults are most likely to be married in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East, and are least likely to be married in South America, Europe, North America, and Oceania; Cohabitation (living together without marriage) is more common among couples in Europe, North America, Oceania, and especially in South America; and Childbearing rates are declining in almost all countries in the world, for example, the highest fertility rates are in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Theoretical framework and Hypotheses

Family structure poses both positive and negative influences on children's personality and cognition (10). Among the negative effect is the case of divorced families. According to (6), children whose parents separate are usually at a disadvantage when compared to parents whose children live together. Recent reviews have shown that children are emotionally distressed by their parent's separation, leading to further consequences on children's cognitive development (1, 12, 13, and 9).

For example, parent's separation affects children's school behavior and achievement. These effects are long-term and have been reported to reduce rates of high school graduation and prolongs years of school completion (11). Although profound effects of divorce on children can be seen in either the disruption or loss of basic children's needs such as: emotional security & lasting bonds, financial aid, supervision and socialization. According to (9), self-esteem, emotional and behavioral problems, and juvenile delinquency are predisposing factors to poor school achievements, which occur as a result of parental divorce and separation. This is because children whose parents are divorced or separated usually have psychological problems such as low self-esteem; this poses problem for the child, and results in behavioral problems due to psychological imbalance; complications such as juvenile delinquency is the latent effect of divorce on children's cognitive development. There are four major forms of family: nuclear, extended, single-parent, and step-parent family.

Methodology

The methodology used in the completion of this research includes:

1. Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC-IV).
2. Parental Attitude Research Instrument (PARI), by American psychologists E.S. Shefer, and R.K.Bell.
3. Method Rene Gilles on social adjustment in children
4. Personally constructed Open-ended questionnaire for demographic variables

Specific objective of research

1. To determine the effects of parents' marital status on children's personality.
2. To determine the influence of family structure in the promotion of cognitive development in children.

Results

In the determination of the outcome of family structure (that is complete or incomplete family) on children's personality (sense of volition) and cognition (initiative), marital status was used as the indicator for family structure. The correlation coefficient showed that

Table 1

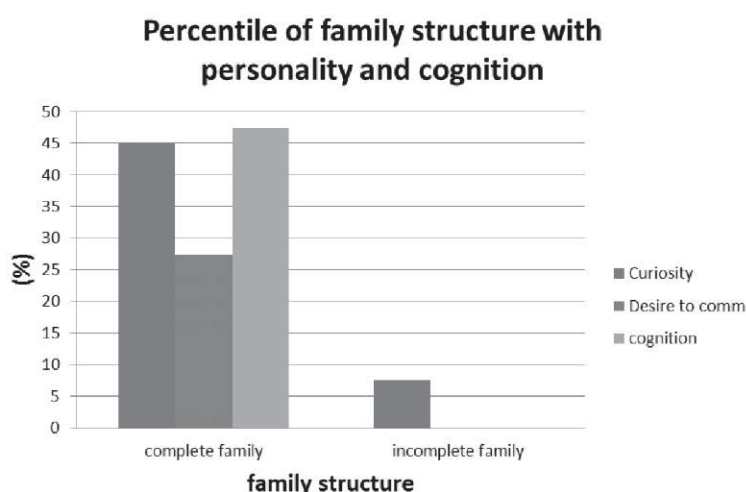
**Analysis of results showing the effects of family structure
(parents' marital status) with children's personality**

RUSSIAN CHILDREN										
Levels	Groups	Parameters (%)								
		Personality				Cognition				
		CUR	COM	DOM	AGGR	GKN	ARI	LOG	TAS	ARR
High	Complete family	45	37.5	27.5	25	32.5	32.5	32.5	47.5	45
	Incomplete family	7.5	0	0	5	2.5	2.5	0	0	0
Middle	Complete family	10	25	5	27.5	22.5	25	15	12.5	22.5
	Incomplete family	2.5	22.5	7.5	5	20	5	5	22.5	22.5
Low	Complete family	15	7.5	37.5	17.5	15	12.5	22.5	10	2.5
	Incomplete family	20	7.5	22.5	20	7.5	22.5	25	7.5	7.5

there is significant correlation between family structure and personality (curiosity-0.41, $p=0.01$; desire to communicate- 0.45, $p=0.01$; desire for dominance- 0.33, $p=0.05$; aggression- 0.34, $p=0.05$); and also showed correlation between marital status and only 4 out of 5 aspects of cognition (arithmetic-0.46, $p=0.01$; logic- 0.52, $p=0.001$; tasks- 0.38, $p=0.05$; arrangement- 0.60, $p=0.001$).

Table 1 shows the percentile of test results. Total number of samples=160 (40 children and 40 parents), all samples were divided into 2 groups (according to the structure of their family as evidenced by the their parents' marital status-COMplete FAMILY, INcomplete FAMILY)

Note. CUR=curiosity, COM=desire to communicate, DOM=desire to dominate, AGGR=aggression, GKN=general knowledge, ARI=arithmetic, LOG=logic, TAS=tasks, ARR=arrangement



Graph 1

Graph 1 shows the percentile cognitive and personality score of samples of Russian children according to their family structure. It was observed that there is a strong relationship between family structure and personality and cognitive development in children. Children from

complete family have good personality behavior (curiosity-45%, desire to communicate-27,5%), and have the highest cognition in the tests on tasks (47, 5%); but children whose family are incomplete have poor personality behaviors ((curiosity-7,5%, desire to communicate-0%), and have low cognitive score, indicating low cognitive level in them (0%).

Discussion and conclusion

The results obtained at the end of this research showed that family structure influences personality and cognition in Russian children, because it represents an important environment for children's development. It was observed that there is a strong relationship between family structure and cognitive development in Russian children. Children from complete family have the highest cognition in the tests on tasks; but children whose families are incomplete have low cognitive scores, indicating low cognitive level in them.

Based on these results, a classification of personality of children is made according to their family structure: "extroverts" and "introverts". This is because children from complete family have good personality behaviors (extroverts- due to their curiosity level and desire to communicate), while children from incomplete family have poor personality behaviors (introverts- due to their lack of communication and low level of curiosity). As forms of recommendation, psychologists should endeavor to create programs that will provide information about family stability. Psychologists and educationists should also create programs and workshops that promotes family unity and prevents family separation.

References

1. *Канцова, Е.А.* (2002). Особенности самосознания подростков при различном восприятии семейной ситуации. *М*, 20.
2. *Карбанова, О.А.* (2005). Психология семейных отношений и основы семейного консультирования. *М*, *Гардарики*, 245.
3. *Привина, М.И.* (2008). Динамика развития саморегуляции поведения у мальчиков – воспитанников социальных приютов. *Психологическая наука и образование*. 1, 5-13.
4. *Редина, Н.К.* (2000). Изучение самопринятия у детей, воспитывающихся в закрытых детских учреждениях и в семье. *Вопросы психологии*, 3, 23-33.

5. Романова, И.А. (2001). Основные направления исследования самопознания в зарубежной психологии. *Психологический журнал*, 1, 102-112.
6. Albertini, M. & Garriga, A. (2011). The effect of divorce on parent-child contacts: evidence on two declining effect hypotheses. *European Societies*, 13, 257-278.
7. Bohlin, G., Hagekull, B. & Rydell, A.M. (2000). Attachment and social functioning: A longitudinal study from infancy to middle childhood. *Social Development*, 9, 24-39.
8. Bugental, D.B. & Johnston, C. (2000). Parental and Child Cognitions in the Context of the Family. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 51, 315-344.
9. Geuzaine, C., Debry, M. & Liesens, V. (2000). Separation from parents in late adolescence: the same for boys and girls? *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 29, 79-91.
10. Hart, D. et al. (2003). Personality and development in childhood: a person-centered approach. *Monographs in Social Research on Child Development*, 68(1), 1-119.
11. Hetherington, E.M., Stanley-Hagan, M.M. (2002). Parenting in divorced and remarried families. In: Bornstein M.H. (Ed.), *Handbook of Parenting*, 3 (pp. 287-315). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
12. Roberts, B. W. et al. (2001). The kids are alright: growth and stability in personality development from adolescence to adulthood. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology*, 81(4), 670-83.
13. Shiner, R. and Caspi A. (2003). Personality differences in childhood and adolescence: measurement, development, and consequences. *Journal of Child Psychology & Psychiatry*. 44(1), 2-32.
14. Swiss, L. & Le Bourdais, C. (2009). Father-child contact after separation The influence of living arrangements. *Journal of Family Issues*, 30, 623-652.